



1 November 2018

## **ANNOUNCEMENT INFORMATION PAPER – COMMENCEMENT OF A REVIEW OF BIOSECURITY IMPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR FRESH APPLE FRUIT FROM THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST STATES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

The commencement of this new risk analysis is in response to a formal market access request for fresh apple fruit (*Malus domestica* Borkh.) from the Pacific Northwest States (Oregon, Idaho and Washington) of the United States of America (PNW-USA) in 1999, and a revised submission in 2007. Fresh apple fruit remains USA's highest horticultural priority for new market access to Australia.

There are two types of import risk analyses conducted by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (the department):

- a Biosecurity Import Risk Analysis (BIRA) which is provided for in section 165 of the [Biosecurity Act 2015](#) (the Act), and Part 4 of the [Biosecurity Regulation 2016](#), and
- a risk analysis for the purposes of section 174 of the Act (such as a review of biosecurity import requirements).

The department conducts a BIRA when:

- relevant risk management measures have not been established, or
- relevant risk management measures for a similar good and pest or disease combination do exist, but the likelihood and/or consequences of entry, establishment or spread of pests or diseases could differ significantly from those previously assessed.

Where the above criteria for a BIRA are not met, the department will conduct a risk analysis for the purpose of section 174 of the Act.

### **Apple industry in the USA**

The USA is the second-largest producer of apples. The USA has 7,500 apple growers who produce an average of 6.5 million tonnes of apple each year, worth close to US\$4 billion.

Apples are grown in 32 states across the USA. The main producing states are Washington, New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania, California, Virginia, North Carolina, Oregon, Ohio and Idaho. The main varieties grown are Red Delicious, Gala, Granny Smith, Fuji, Golden Delicious, Honeycrisp, McIntosh, Rome, Cripps Pink/Pink Lady® and Empire.

Apple exports from the USA totalled 930,328 tonnes and 989,085 tonnes in 2015 and 2016 export seasons, respectively. Five per cent of apples consumed in the USA are imported to cover seasonal demands. The main sources of apple imports to the USA are Chile, Canada and New Zealand.

## **Apple industry in Australia**

In 2016-17, Australia produced close to 320,000 tonnes of apple, worth close to \$497 million.

Apples are grown in all states across Australia. Victoria is the main producer, accounting for 44 per cent of the national production, followed by New South Wales and Queensland with 15 and 13 per cent of the production, respectively. The main varieties grown are Pink Lady, Royal Gala and Granny Smith, accounting for 37, 23 and 20 per cent of the production, respectively. Apples are grown throughout the year, with a peak harvest season between March and May.

## **Australia's apple imports**

Australia has import policies for fresh apple fruit from China, New Zealand and Japan. All imports must meet Australia's biosecurity import conditions. In 2016-17, Australia imported 698 tonnes of apples from China and 355 tonnes of apples from New Zealand, worth close to \$2.4 million.

No trade has occurred from Japan. Operational requirements need to be finalised before trade can commence.

## **Australia's apple exports**

Australia exported approximately 4,665 and 4,950 tonnes of apples in 2015-16 and 2016-17, respectively. Exports primarily went to the United Kingdom, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

Australian apples have market access to the USA; however, they have not been exported to the USA in recent years.

In addition, Australian apples have market access to over 20 countries, including the European Union, Thailand, India, the Philippines and Taiwan, among others.

## **Trade between Australia and the USA**

Australia has a Free Trade Agreement with the USA (AUSFTA), which entered into effect in 2005. In 2016, the USA was Australia's third largest trading partner for imports and exports. In this period, total Australia exports to the USA were valued at \$12.4 billion and total imports from the USA at \$29.7 billion.

The main goods exported to the USA were meat, aircraft and spacecraft (including parts). The main goods imported from the USA were passenger motor vehicles, aircraft, spacecraft (including parts) and medical instruments.

In 2016-17, the total two-way agricultural, fisheries and forestry trade was worth \$6.2 billion. Australian agricultural exports to the USA were valued at around \$3.9 billion; imports from the USA were valued at around \$2.3 billion.

Over the past 5 years, Australia has gained market access for four fresh fruit commodities into the USA: mango, lychee, tangelo and grapefruit. Trade has commenced for these commodities.

In addition, market access into the USA for citrus from additional production areas of Australia (Bourke and Narromine, inland Queensland and Western Australia) has made steady progress.

## **History of this market access request**

In 2008, the department commenced a risk analysis for fresh apple fruit from PNW-USA, and released a [draft report](#) for public consultation in 2009. This risk analysis was commenced as an expanded Import Risk Analysis (IRA) under the *Quarantine Regulations 2000*.

In 2010, the department 'stopped the clock' on the expanded IRA using provisions under the *Quarantine Regulations 2000*. This was required to allow the USA time to propose risk management measures for three fruit rots (*Sphaeropsis pyriputrescens*, *Phacidiopycnis washingtonensis* and *Phacidiopycnis piri*) that are associated with apples from the USA.

On 16 June 2016, the *Quarantine Act 1908* and *Quarantine Regulations 2000* were repealed and replaced by the *Biosecurity Act 2015* (the Act) and *Biosecurity Regulation 2016*. As a result, the expanded IRA for fresh apple fruit from PNW-USA has ceased.

The department now undertakes risk analyses in accordance with the Act and the *Biosecurity Regulation 2016*. If a risk analysis does not meet the criteria for a BIRA (as described above) it is conducted as a risk analysis for the purpose of section 174 of the Act.

## **Preliminary assessment of potential pests associated with fresh apple fruit from PNW-USA**

The department conducted a preliminary assessment of potential pests of biosecurity concern associated with fresh apples from PNW-USA. The preliminary assessment drew on the scientific information compiled in the IRA from 2008 (now ceased), existing policies including apples from China, New Zealand and Japan, and any new scientific information.

The preliminary assessment indicates that the potential pests of biosecurity concern associated with fresh apples from PNW-USA are the same (or of the same pest groups) as the ones the department has already assessed, and for which risk management measures are established.

The potential pests of biosecurity concern associated with fresh apples from PNW-USA include apple maggot, apple leaf curling midge, fruit/leaf roller moths, mites, thrips, mealybugs, fire blight, European canker and fruit rots. The department will conduct further assessment to determine whether require risk management measures will be required to achieve Australia's appropriate level of protection.

Based on the outcome of the preliminary assessment, and the fact that risk management measures are established for the potential pests associated with apple from PNW-USA, the risk analysis for fresh apples from PNW-USA does not meet the criteria for a BIRA. Therefore, the department will progress this new risk analysis as a review of biosecurity import requirements.

## Next steps

The department expects to release a draft report for a 60-calendar day public consultation period during the first half of 2019. The department encourages stakeholders to submit their comments on the draft report once it is released.

The final report will consider stakeholder comments on the draft report.

If you would like to know more about this risk analysis or the risk analysis process please email [plantstakeholders@agriculture.gov.au](mailto:plantstakeholders@agriculture.gov.au) or phone +61 2 6272 5094.